

REMARKS

Applicant requests favorable reconsideration and allowance of the subject application in view of the preceding amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1-4, 7-10 and 13-19 are presented for consideration. Claims 1 and 7 are independent. Claims 5, 6, 11, 12 and 20-26 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. No new matter has been added.

Applicant notes with appreciation that claims 1-4, 7-10 and 13-19 have been allowed over the art of record.

Applicant requests favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action.

Claims 5, 6 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,411,365 to Takeishi in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,477,304 to Nishi. Claim 12 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 based on that art combination and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,663,720 to Takahashi. Claims 20-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over the combination of the Takeishi patent and the Nishi patent, and further in view of U.S. patent application publication number 2001/0055100 to Murakami. These rejections are respectfully traversed. Nevertheless, to expedite allowance of this application, as discussed above, Applicant has canceled claims 5, 6, 11, 12 and 20-26 without prejudice or disclaimer.


All pending claims being allowable, Applicant submits that the instant application is in condition for allowance.

Accordingly, Applicant further submits that this Amendment After Final Rejection clearly places this application in condition for allowance. This Amendment was not earlier presented because Applicant believed that the prior Amendment placed the application in condition for allowance. Accordingly, entry of the instant Amendment, as an earnest attempt to advance prosecution and reduce the number of issues, is requested under 37 CFR 1.116.

Favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action and an early Notice of Allowance are also requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steven E. Warner", is written over a horizontal line.

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